

CLAIMS

1. RANTES-derived peptides containing 10 to 19 amino acids, of formula (I):

5 Ac-C-x1-PYI-x2-x3-Y-NH2 (I)

wherein Ac- represents an acetyl residue, -NH₂ a carboxamido terminus, x₁ and x₃, which can be the same or different, are selected from the group consisting of the hydrophobic residues Phe, Tyr, 1Nal (L-beta-1-naphthyl-alanine), 2Nal (L-beta-2-naphthyl-alanine), Cha (L-beta-cyclohexyl-alanine), x₂ is a spacer containing 2 to 12 amino acidic residues.

2. Peptides as claimed in claim 1, wherein x2 is selected from 1) the sequence 16-27 of RANTES, 2) the sequence 16-27 of RANTES in which 1 to 3 amino acidic residues are replaced with different natural or non natural L or D amino acids, 3) the sequence 16-27 of RANTES in which a group of at least two, preferably at least three and no more than nine residues, either consecutive or non consecutive, is removed.

3. Peptides as claimed in claim 1, in which x2 is selected from ARPLPR-X-HIKEYF, ARPLPR-X-HIKEY1NaI, ARPLPR-X-HIKEY2NaI, ARPLPR-X-HIKEYCha, ARPLPR-X-HIF, ARPLPR-X-HYF, ARPLPR-X-EYF, ARPLPRKEYF, ARPLPIKEYF, ARP-X-HIKEYF, wherein X is Ala or Pro.

4. Dimers of the peptides (I) in which two peptides are linked by disulfide bond between Cys residues at position 1.

5. Pharmaceutical compositions containing as active ingredient a peptide (I) or a dimer thereof as claimed in the above claims.

- 25 6. Pharmaceutical compositions as claimed in claim 5, for use in the treatment of diseases in which the RANTES receptor is involved.

7. The use of the peptides (I) or dimers thereof as claimed in claims 1-4 for the preparation of a medicament useful for the treatment of viral

infections, particularly HIV infections, and of inflammatory, allergic, degenerative, neoplastic or metastatic diseases.